



The City of

**SAN DIEGO** Public Utilities Department

**FACT SHEET**

## Graywater Systems – System and Rebate Information

Did you know that a standard home generates approximately 160 gallons of graywater per day, or nearly 60,000 gallons per year? Using graywater is an excellent way to recycle and conserve water, and can help you reduce potable water consumption. Your indoor water can be used as graywater, providing a constant source of reusable water for irrigating landscape.

### What is Graywater?

Graywater is untreated wastewater which has not come into contact with toilet waste. It is used water from showers and baths, bathroom sinks and washing machines that can be directly reused for irrigation without undergoing a treatment process.

Graywater does not include water from toilets, kitchen sinks, dishwashers or laundry water from soiled diapers, due to potential health issues. Also, be aware that some soaps and detergents can contain chemicals that may be harmful to your plants when using graywater for irrigation.

### How do I put a Graywater System in my home?

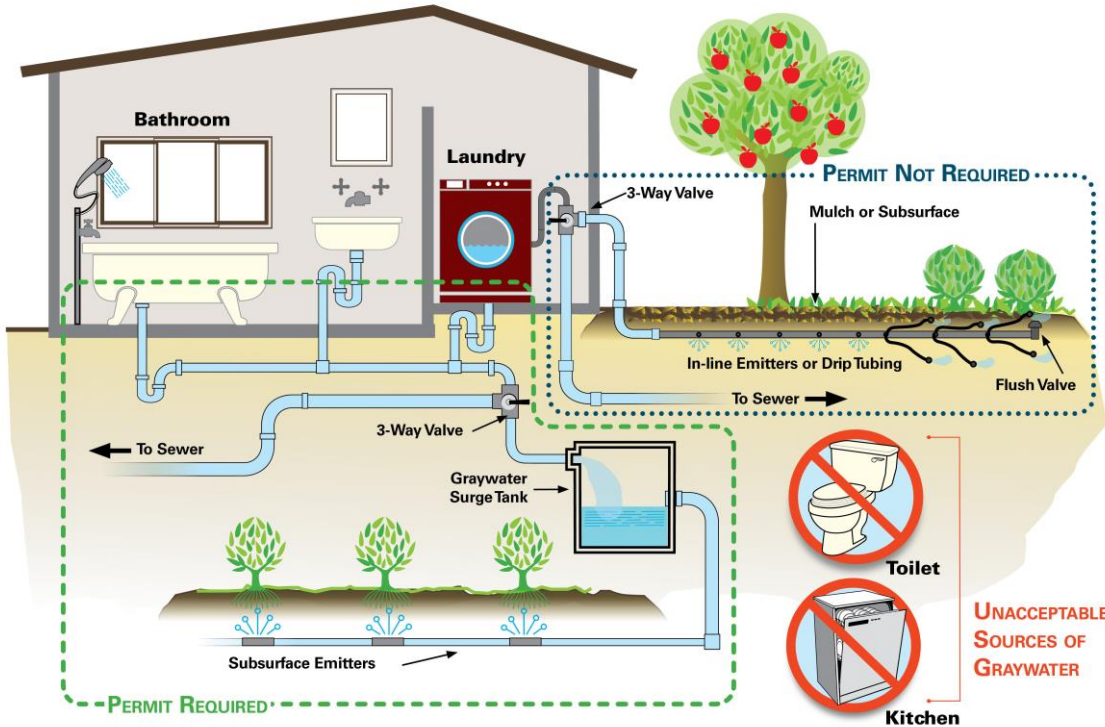
In 2013, the City streamlined its permitting process for “simple” and “complex” graywater systems installation in an effort to encourage homeowners to conserve water and save money. The steps you need to take depend largely on what type of system you plan to install. Some systems do not require permits. Chapter 16A of the California Plumbing Code details system requirements, and plumbers and other professionals are available for the design and installation process if you feel you need help.

- **No-Permit Systems** - Closed Clothes Washer Systems are graywater systems that utilize only a single domestic clothes washing machine in a one or two family dwelling, and do not need a permit. The City has expanded the no-permit requirement to systems used for landscape irrigation that discharge less than 250 gallons a day, and primarily consist of systems taking discharge water from washing machines. **Rebates range from \$150-\$250. Materials not totaling the \$150 minimum requirement will not be rebated.**
- **Permit Systems** - Permitting is still required for simple and complex systems that take discharge water from other elements in a residence—such as bathtubs and showers—that require more extensive in-house plumbing, electrical or mechanical modifications, or the use of a pump. However, in 2013, the City took important steps to streamline the permitting process for residents to install these graywater systems, streamlining the process for customers. **This system may be rebated up to \$1000 for materials and permitting fees.**

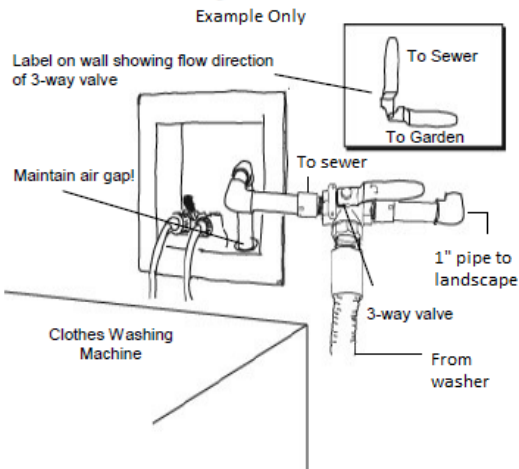
Per the California Plumbing Code, a written construction permit must be obtained from the Enforcing Agency (the Development Services Department) prior to the erection, construction, reconstruction, installation, relocation or alteration of any graywater system that requires a permit.



## SAMPLE RESIDENTIAL GRAYWATER SYSTEMS



### Three-Way Valve Method



### Websites with additional graywater system information

- [City of San Diego Development Services Department](#)
- [City of San Diego Water Department](#)
- [San Diego County Dept. of Environmental Health](#)
- [San Diego County Water Authority's "E-Guide to a WaterSmart Lifestyle"](#)
- [California Urban Water Conservation Council](#)
- [San Diego Sustainable Living Institute](#)
- [California Department of Housing and Community Development, Emergency Rulemaking](#)

If you are unable to open these hyperlinks please type the key words into your search engine.

### Parameters and Requirements

- A graywater clothes washer system does not require a plumbing permit however, more complex systems will. Refer to San Diego Info. Bulletin 208, II, 1-11 dated July 2014.
- The three-way valve shall be clearly labeled and readily accessible to the user.
- The graywater shall be contained on site with no run-off onto adjacent properties, streets or sidewalks and shall not be connected to potable water piping.
- Graywater shall be directed to and contained within an irrigation or disposal field.
- Graywater may be released above the ground surface provided at least two inches of mulch, rock, or soil, or a solid shield covers the release point and shall not pond.